



BEWARE THE TIGER

Safety rules are a nuisance. They restrict you from doing what you want to do in the way you want to do it. You would think that the person who wrote safety rules must have been an old fuddy-duddy who couldn't stand to see people having fun--that they sat down with their aching corns and wrote the safety rules much the way some musicians compose music at one sitting. Such is not the case: Safety rules were written with the splinters of human bones dipped in human blood.

The rules began to be written before people even began to think. They perhaps were what started them to think in the first place.

People crawling around in the prehistoric age had no safety rules; they had no language either. They noticed that a furry looking animal with yellow stripes was eating their spouse and children. They had a thought (their first one): "That beast not friend," then a second thought: " That beast enemy!"

Then came the first invention in the history of humankind -- they made a safety rule: **"Beware of the Tiger."**

The first safety rule was perhaps just a screech emitted in the same key every time a tiger was sighted. It was annoying to the people who had to stop doing whatever they were doing and go climb a tree or crawl under a rock. It was annoying, but the tigers began to get skinny, and people became more numerous.

Following the same line of thought, they decided that the lion, too, was an enemy and invented a different screech for the lion and another safety rule.

People who were annoyed at having to run for their lives now for the first time knew from

why they were running, without first having seen it.

The tragic thing about safety rules is that they were slow in being made. The people had to be eaten by the tiger and the lion before the rules came into existence.

How much nicer it would have been if the person who invented the emery wheel also made a sign at the same time and hung it over the machine saying, "Wear goggles but not gloves when using this machine." Think of the countless mangled hands and sightless eyes and lives lost during the interval between the invention of the grinding wheel and the hanging of that annoying safety sign above it!

In the event that an accident should befall you, it is conceivable that the person the company has to train to take your job will be a better worker than you; or that the person your widow marries will be a better person than you; or your children's stepparent will be better for them than you.

But -- why put it to a test? The person who gains the most by following a safety rule is you!

Tailgate Safety Meeting Topics website, authored by Susan McElrath, located at <http://www.webworldinc.com/wes-con/safety2.html-ssi>